

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A combined bill acceptor and data unit reader, comprising:

5 a bill acceptor;

a host interface; and

a data unit reader interposed between said bill acceptor and said host interface, said data unit reader passing through cash transaction data from said bill acceptor to said host interface when currency is accepted by said bill acceptor, and transmitting cashless transaction data to said host interface when a data unit is read by said data unit reader.

2. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 1, wherein said data unit reader comprises a relay, and wherein said data unit reader passes through cash transaction data from said bill acceptor to said host interface when said relay is in a first position, and prevents cash transaction data from passing through from said bill acceptor to said host interface when said relay is in a second position.

3. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 2, wherein said host interface comprises a protocol translator, said protocol

translator converting cash transaction data from a bill validator protocol to a protocol used by a host device connected to said host interface.

4. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 1,  
5 wherein said data unit reader comprises a bill acceptor data interface  
connected to said bill acceptor, and a microprocessor, said microprocessor  
controlling the transfer of data between said bill acceptor data interface and  
said host interface.

5. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 4,  
wherein said bill acceptor data interface and said host interface each comprise  
a universal asynchronous receiver/transceiver (UART).

6. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader unit of claim 1,  
15 wherein said data unit reader comprises a smart card reader.

7. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 6,  
wherein said smart card reader performs an authentication and validation  
procedure when a smart card is inserted in said smart card reader.

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8. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 1, wherein said cash transaction data is communicated by said bill acceptor according to a B.V. bill validator protocol.

5 9. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 1, wherein said host interface is connected to an electronic gaming machine.

10. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 1, wherein said data unit comprises a secured internal meter.

11. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 10, wherein said secured internal meter is contained with a security and authentication module (SAM).

15 12. The combined bill acceptor and data unit reader of claim 1, further comprising a security module interposed between said data unit reader and a host device connected to said host interface, said security module permitting transparent communication between said data unit reader and said host device after completion of an authentication and validation process, and  
20 otherwise preventing communication between said data unit reader and said host device.

13. A multi-mode card reader, comprising:

a card reader interface;

a bill acceptor interface; and

a controller connected to said card reader interface, said bill acceptor

5 interface, and a host interface, said controller allowing transfer of cash transaction data from said bill acceptor interface to said host interface when said cash transaction data is received from said bill acceptor interface and said controller is in a first mode, and allowing transfer of cashless transaction data from said card reader interface to said host interface when said cashless transaction data is received from said card reader interface and said controller is in a second mode.

14. The multi-mode card reader of claim 13 further comprising a relay, wherein said relay passes through cash transaction data from said bill acceptor  
15 interface to said host interface when in a first position, and prevents cash transaction data from passing from said bill acceptor interface to said host interface when in a second position.

15. The multi-mode card reader of claim 14, wherein said host interface  
20 comprises a protocol translator, said protocol translator converting cash

transaction data from a bill validator protocol to a protocol used by a host device connected to said host interface.

16. The multi-mode card reader of claim 14, wherein said relay switches  
5 from said first position to said second position when said card reader interface detects insertion of a portable electronic card.

17. The multi-mode card reader of claim 13, wherein said bill acceptor  
data interface and said host interface each comprise a universal asynchronous receiver/transceiver (UART).

18. The multi-mode card reader unit of claim 13, wherein said card  
reader interface is configured to read smart cards.

19. The multi-mode card reader of claim 13, wherein said bill acceptor  
15 interface receives said cash transaction data according to a B.V. bill validator protocol.

20. The multi-mode card reader of claim 13, wherein said host interface  
20 is connected to an electronic gaming machine.

21. The multi-mode card reader of claim 13, further comprising a secured internal meter.

22. The multi-mode card reader of claim 21, wherein said secured  
5 internal meter is contained with a security and authentication module (SAM).

23. The multi-mode card reader of claim 13, wherein when in said second mode, cash transaction data received at said bill acceptor interface is used to credit a card inserted in said card reader interface.

24. A method for controlling cash and cashless transactions at a combined bill acceptor and card reader, comprising the steps of:

receiving a card at a card reader;  
processing data on said card and generating cashless transaction data  
15 thereby;

receiving cash at a bill acceptor;  
generating cash transaction data in response to the receipt of cash at the bill acceptor;

transmitting said cash transaction data to said card reader;  
20 selecting between at least a cash mode and cashless mode;

when in said cash mode, relaying said cash transaction data to a host device interface; and

when in said cashless mode, transmitting said cashless transaction data to said host device interface.

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25. The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of switching from a standby mode to said cash mode when cash transaction data is received at said card reader, and switching from said standby mode to said cashless mode when a card is received at said card acceptor.

26. The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of adding credit to a card received at said card acceptor in response to receiving cash transaction data at said card reader when in said cashless mode.

27. The method of claim 24, wherein said step of relaying said cash transaction data to said host device interface further comprises the step of relaying said cash transaction data to an electronic gaming machine, and wherein said step of transmitting said cashless transaction data to said host device interface further comprises the step of transmitting said cashless transaction data to said electronic gaming machine.

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28. The method of claim 24, wherein said step of relaying said cash transaction data to said host device interface comprises the step of relaying said cash transaction data via a relay to said host device interface when said relay is in a closed position, and wherein said step of transmitting said cashless transaction data to said host device interface is carried out when said relay is in an open position.

29. The method of claim 24, wherein said step of relaying said cash transaction data to a host device interface comprises the step of transmitting cash transaction data according to a B.V. bill validator protocol.

30. The method of claim 24, wherein said step of transmitting said cashless transaction data to said host device interface comprises the step of transmitting said cashless transaction data according to a standard gaming protocol.

31. The method of claim 24, wherein said step of receiving said card at said card reader comprises the step of receiving a smart card at a smart card reader.



32. A combined bill acceptor and smart card reader, comprising:

a bill acceptor;

a host interface; and

a smart card reader interposed between said bill acceptor and said host

5 interface, said smart card reader passing through cash transaction data from said bill acceptor to said host interface when currency is accepted by said bill acceptor and said smart card reader is in a cash mode, and transmitting cashless transaction data to said host interface when a smart card is read by said smart card reader and said smart card reader is in a cashless mode.

33. The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 32, wherein said smart card reader includes a standby mode, said smart card reader switching from said standby mode to said cash mode when receiving cash transaction data from said bill acceptor, and switching from said standby mode to said cashless mode upon insertion of said smart card.

34. The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 33, wherein, when in said cashless mode, said smart card reader adds credit to said smart card upon receiving cash transaction data from said bill acceptor.

35. The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 34, wherein said smart card reader temporarily disables said bill acceptor when reading credit information from said smart card.

5 36. The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 32, wherein said smart card reader comprises a relay, and wherein said smart card reader passes through cash transaction data from said bill acceptor to said host interface when said relay is in a first position, and prevents cash transaction data from passing through from said bill acceptor to said host interface when said relay is in a second position.

10 37 The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 32, wherein said host interface comprises a protocol translator, said protocol translator converting cash transaction data from a bill validator protocol to a protocol used by a host device connected to said host interface.

15 38. The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 32, wherein said smart card reader comprises a bill acceptor data interface connected to said bill acceptor, and a microprocessor, said microprocessor  
20 controlling the transfer of data between said bill acceptor data interface and said host interface.

39. The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 38, wherein said bill acceptor data interface and said host interface each comprise a universal asynchronous receiver/transceiver (UART).

5 40. The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 32, wherein said host interface is connected to an electronic gaming machine.

41. The combined bill acceptor and smart card reader of claim 32, wherein said smart card reader comprises a secured internal meter contained with a security and authentication module (SAM).

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